

REMARKS

In the above-identified Office Action, claims 21, 37, 38 and 39 have been objected to because of certain noted informalities. Applicant has amended these claims and as amended, believe that the informalities no longer exist and accordingly, the claims should be acceptable.

Claim 22 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite. Applicant has amended claim 22 so that it now has proper antecedent basis in claim 19 and as such, claim 22 is considered acceptable under 35 U.S.C. §112.

Claims 1, 7, 19, 22, 37 and 40 have been rejected as being anticipated under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) by Kosugi et al. Applicant has amended the above claims so that now each contains the limitation that the plane parallel manipulation chamber has non-bending end plates. The prior art, and particularly Kosugi et al., does not teach the use of non-bending end plates. While Kosugi et al. does show a frame, there is no mention of the frame being non-bending and in fact, glass plates 3 and 4 of Kosugi et al. are taught to deform outwardly under pressure differences, though there is no disclosure as to whether or not the frame is also deformed. However, in claim 5 of Kosugi et al. is stated as extending along a circle with a center on the optical axis. Accordingly, Kosugi et al. cannot have end plates, thus cannot have non-bending end plates. As a result, claims 1, 7, 19, 22, 37 and 40 are considered allowable.

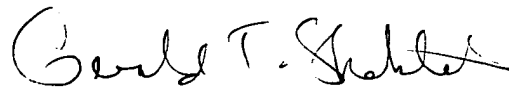
Claims 2, 3, 21, 24, 29, 31, 32, 38, 39, 41 and 42 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kosugi et al. and further in view of Taniguchi. Applicant has amended claims 2, 3, 21 and 29 to reflect that the gas chamber is selected from the group of nitrogen, oxygen and helium or a mixture thereof. These gases are not taught by either Kosugi et al. or Taniguchi and accordingly, Applicant believes that these claims and the claims dependent thereon are therefore patentable over such art. Further, claims 31 and 43 would appear to be patentable and that Kosugi et al. does not teach that the plane parallel manipulation chamber is located in the lens arrangement between an end plate and the lens situated adjacent the end plate. The Examiner has stated that the manipulation chamber is located in the lens arrangement referring to Figure 5 but Applicant does not believe this to be correct as plates 3 and 4 of Figure 5 are end plates and not lenses. Furthermore, the Examiner has also stated that the manipulation

chamber is located between and end plate and the lens situated adjacent to the end plates. This is also incorrect since Figure 5 is a last lens shown by the numeral 22. As a result, claim 41 and 42 are allowable, and particularly as they now recite having non-bending end plates.

Applicants hereby request reconsideration and reexamination thereof.

With the above amendments, the Applicants consider the subject application to be ready for allowance, and Applicants earnestly solicit an early notice of same. If the Examiner is of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject application, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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